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ABSTRACT

Six California community colleges were studied in an effort to develop a model for gathering, describing, and analyzing interview and document data derived from college governance personnel about the common organizational culture they share and then drawing conclusions about the "cultural congruence" that exists among them. The six colleges selected for the study had been identified by a statewide panel of experts as having governance systems with reputations characterized as either "most" or "least" effective. Interviews were conducted with governing board presidents; the campus chief executive officers; chief instructional officers; chief student services officers; and senate presidents present, past, and elect. Interviews focused on the history of the college and its governance system, key contributors to the governance process, the purposes of governance, and symbols of governance at the college. The interview data demonstrated that cultural congruence, as measured by similar responses by the interviewees from each campus to specific questions about elements of common culture, existed at higher than the 50% level among the campus-based governance personnel. The colleges with positive reputations for governance effectiveness achieved higher levels of congruence in response to those questions requiring higher order thinking, and the colleges with negative reputations for governance achieved higher levels of congruence in response to questions requiring concrete thinking. (Author/AC)

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